ADVANCED GRANT WRITING

How to Read Requests for Proposals and Write a Strong Proposal

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- **Grant Development Supports**

  - Help researchers understand funding guidelines
  - Find funding and offer individual training on Pivot (online funding database)
  - Critique and edit researchers' grant narratives
  - Review and edit ancillary documents

AGENDA

- How to navigate a grant solicitation

- Walk-Through of *American Council of Learned Societies*, Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellowship

- Tips for Writing Grants

NOTE: This session is being recorded. Please mute your microphones.

HOW TO READ A SOLICITATION

Proposal fundamentals

- ## **Who Can Apply?**
  - Does the funder make grants to academic institutions or individuals?
  - Are *you* eligible? At the right stage of your education. A member of a target group? Any limitations on citizenship?
  - Double check that the opportunity isn't a limited submission.
- ## **Why it matters**
  - Eligibility is the first thing to check - don't waste precious time reviewing guidelines if you or UO doesn't fit the strictures of the funder.
  - If you or UO is ineligible, your application would be automatically rejected.

FIRST:
ELIGIBILITY

SECOND: SPONSOR FOCUS

- **Priorities**
  - Sponsors have their own goals
  - Priorities may change from one year to the next
  - Look for words like *purpose, goals, objectives, seeks to*
- **Why it's important**
  - Reveals fit with your own research topic
  - Projects not in alignment with the funder's goals won't score well

THIRD: BUDGET

- **Assess whether the grant provides enough funds for your project**
  - External funds can bolster an existing GE appointment by providing money for participant incentives, or research materials.
- **Review allowed vs. unallowable costs**
  - Not all funders will pay for all aspects of a project.
  - Understand what you are allowed to put into your proposal budget

FOURTH: APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- **Structure:** Look for what information is sought, and in what format
  - CV or Biographical Sketch?
  - Letters of support?
  - Writing samples?
  - Special forms needing institutional signatures?
- **Compliance**
  - Read for obligations—words like *must, required, may only, restricted, limited to, prohibited*

- **Common measures used for assessing / scoring applications**
  - Need for the Project
  - Significance/ Impact of the work
  - Novel / Innovative nature of the proposed research/ project
  - Expertise of the applicant
  - Feasibility of the project – design, timeline, budget

FIFTH: REVIEW CRITERIA

SIXTH: SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- **Format**
  - PDFs uploaded into a portal?
  - Short answers typed into online system?
  - Emailed application?
- **Who Submits?**
  - Individual researcher may submit for some applications
  - Nearly all federal applications are submitted by SPS

WALK-THROUGH OF FUNDING SOLICITATION

Reading and interpreting the *American Council of Learned Societies,* Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellowship
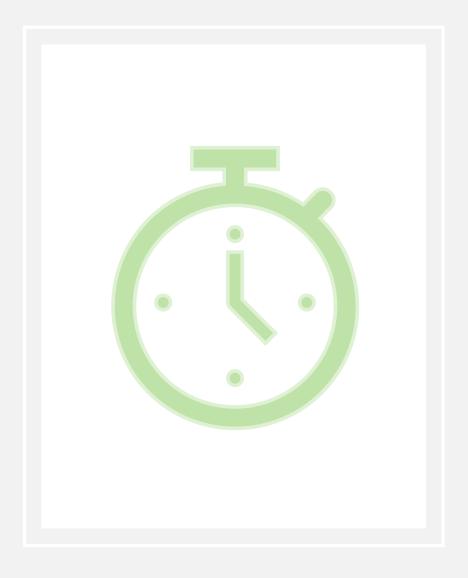
TIPS FOR GRANT WRITING

Best practices for success

THE ART OF PREPARATION

- Register on a funder's site well in advance of the deadline.

- Read guidelines, start to finish. Note any eligibility limitations.

- Review past successful proposals.

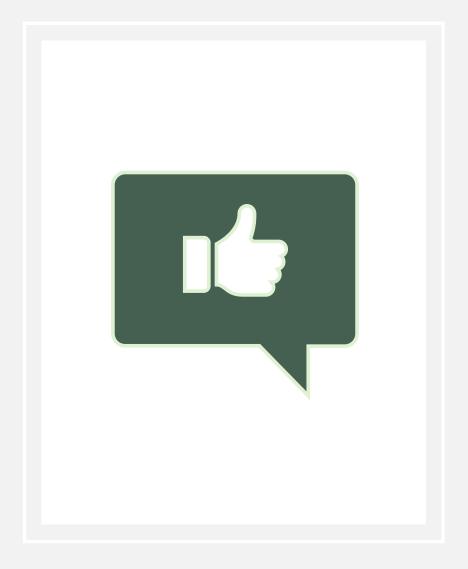- Coordinate with faculty advisor and RDS to review your work.

THE ART OF WRITING

- Start early! Time for multiple drafts.

- Use active voice. Be concise.

- Write both for specialists and generalists.

- Avoid technical language or jargon. Define it where it must be used.

- Proofread. Sloppy applications don't impress the reviewers.

THE ART OF PERSUASION

- Address all evaluation criteria.

- Explain / foreground project's significance!

- Locate project in larger scholarly context.

- Locate project in your scholarly trajectory.

- Provide snapshots/stories that intrigue the reader.

THE ART OF PERSUASION (CONTINUED)

- Provide a realistic timeframe & workplan.

- State the expected outcomes of your work clearly.

- Describe project with enough concrete detail to be convincing. Don't exaggerate.

- Make no assumptions about the readers' knowledge of your research.

OTHER ARTFUL TIPS

- **Start Early**
  - Reviewers will spot a rushed proposal.
- **Save effort**
  - Apply to multiple funders for the same project.
- **Remember Writing Style**
  - Grant writing is persuasive and has a particular form and style. Do not write as like a scholarly article.
- **Keep Trying**
  - Successful applicants often fail at first. Try and try again!

QUESTIONS?

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